UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/413
7 September 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Item 111 of the provisional agenda*

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Introduction

1. By its resolution 49/174 of 23 December 1994, the General Assembly, inter alia,

(a) Called upon the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and United Nations humanitarian organizations to continue their efforts to mobilize humanitarian assistance for the relief, repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, including those refugees in urban areas;

(b) Called upon Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to provide the necessary support and financial assistance to the High Commissioner to enhance her capacities and abilities to implement emergency operations, care and maintenance activities and repatriation and reintegration programmes for the benefit of refugees, returnees and, as appropriate, certain groups of internally displaced persons;

(c) Requested the High Commissioner to continue her efforts with the appropriate United Nations organizations, the Organization of African Unity and

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intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations to consolidate and increase essential services to refugees, returnees and displaced persons;

(d) Also requested the High Commissioner to review her general programmes in Africa, taking into account the increasing requirements in that region;

(e) Appealed to Member States and international and non-governmental organizations to provide adequate financial, material and technical assistance for relief and rehabilitation programmes for the large number of refugees, voluntary returnees and displaced persons and victims of natural disasters and to the affected countries;

(f) Expressed deep concern at the serious and far-reaching consequences of the presence of large numbers of refugees and displaced persons in the countries concerned and the implications for the security environment and their long-term socio-economic development;

(g) Called upon the international donor community to provide material and financial assistance for the implementation of programmes intended for the rehabilitation of the environment and infrastructure in areas affected by refugees in countries of asylum;

(h) Requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize adequate financial and material assistance for the full implementation of present and future projects in rural and urban areas affected by the presence of refugees, returnees and displaced persons.

I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

Overview

2. Since the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/174 on 23 December 1994, Africa has continued to be plagued by refugee crises. The continent currently hosts nearly 50 per cent of the world's refugees. This year, UNHCR assisted nearly 8 million refugees in Africa, as well as almost 5 million internally displaced persons and returnees.

3. During the reporting period, the main causes of population displacements and refugee flows were man-made, provoked by political, ethnic and economic conflicts. Widespread famine, insecurity, violence exacerbated by poverty, and environmental degradation also incited new population movements.

4. Following the massive exodus of more than 2 million people from Rwanda to neighbouring countries last year, the situation in the Great Lakes region throughout the reporting period remained extremely fragile and displacement continued. Abuse of human rights, violence, uncertainty and insecurity have been widespread. Refugee flows also continued in other parts of Africa, most notably in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the Sudan, with little hope of an early solution. The number of those in need of protection and assistance grew

daily. The traditional generosity towards refugees in Africa has become strained. Thus, the institution of asylum is under threat, and more restrictive policies and practices are becoming evident in a number of countries.

5. In at least two major incidents in early 1995, borders were closed to refugees fleeing danger in their countries of origin. Large numbers of refugees have been forced to return to the life-threatening situations from which they fled. Some have been killed in refugee camps, others have been brutally attacked and terrorized. In several cases, Governments have expressed their inability to receive new or additional influxes. In other cases, they have been reluctant to receive refugees from countries not immediately adjacent to them.

6. In spite of this sombre picture, the peaceful democratic changes that have occurred in several parts of Africa have created opportunities for large numbers of refugees to return to their homes. There are improved prospects for voluntary repatriation of refugees and reintegration of returnees. Today, nearly all of the 1.6 million Mozambican refugees to whom UNHCR was providing assistance have returned home. In the Horn of Africa, over 600,000 Ethiopians have returned from Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan since 1991. The repatriation of Eritrean refugees is under way, with some 25,000 having so far gone back under a pilot programme which started in November 1994. In May this year, the repatriation of 8,000 Chadian refugees from the Central African Republic was completed. UNHCR is currently finalizing arrangements for the voluntary repatriation of the Togolese refugees in Benin and Ghana.

7. The Office also is following closely developments in Mali, in the hope that the 150,000 Malian refugees of Tuareg origin in Algeria, Burkina Faso and Mauritania will soon be able to go back home. The peace process in Angola, which should pave the way for the 300,000 Angolan refugees in the Congo, Namibia, Zambia and Zaire to repatriate, is also a source of encouragement to UNHCR. Planning for the operation has been completed in close consultation with the Government of Angola and with the neighbouring host countries. A series of agreements has been concluded between the concerned Governments and UNHCR, concerning the process of return and reintegration.

8. Whether in the case of Eritrea or Angola, Mozambique or Ethiopia, refugees are returning to countries in the process of profound change, to villages which have been devastated by war, homes which have been destroyed, schools and hospitals left in ruins, roads and fields heavily mined. The reintegration of returnees is a major challenge under these circumstances but, given the mandate of UNHCR, what it can do is limited. As in the case of Mozambique, UNHCR has set up small-scale quick impact projects (QIPs) that promote self-sufficiency of returnees and their communities. But these fall far short of the overall needs.

9. More comprehensive, timely and sustained efforts are needed to rehabilitate war-torn societies. They must be comprehensive in order to address both the range of needs faced by the country and the diversity of beneficiaries, whether they be returning refugees, internally displaced or those who remained behind. The efforts must be timely because peace is most fragile in its infancy, and must be seen to pay early dividends to those who are most affected by war or conflict. While recognizing the work of development agencies and financial institutions, the international community must press for new means and methods

to respond faster and to meet rehabilitation needs earlier. Development should not follow in the footsteps of humanitarian relief but, wherever possible, should be launched simultaneously, and in a complementary and mutually supportive manner. Most importantly, for peace to be consolidated, development and rehabilitation resources must be provided in a sustained manner.

10. The persistence of population movements and refugee flows calls for a comprehensive approach focusing on three principal elements: prevention, the adverse impact of refugees on asylum countries, and the search for durable solutions.

(a) Prevention. Poverty, environmental degradation, population pressures and competition for scarce resources often fuel ethnic, social, political and religious tensions. They, in turn, provoke violence which leads to refugee flows. Therefore, economic development is essential for the prevention of refugee problems. But this cannot be pursued in isolation from political efforts to promote respect for human rights, the rule of law and accountable governance;

(b) Impact on asylum countries. The impact of displacement on countries of asylum is often damaging to the local socio-economic infrastructure and to the natural environment. Countries like the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire, hosting large numbers of refugees, cannot be expected to bear fully this burden without the financial support and solidarity of the international community. However, international assistance does not compensate for the collateral negative impact of refugees on the host country. A concerted effort on the part of the international community to provide comprehensive development assistance would relieve, to some degree, the considerable strain often caused by large refugee populations on their host countries. While acknowledging the burden borne by asylum countries and the generosity which they have shown, the application of more restrictive policies and practices by some countries has been a cause for concern. The High Commissioner has urged Governments to continue to receive refugees and to provide them with the safety and protection they need, in accordance with internationally recognized principles;

(c) Durable solutions. Development is crucial in promoting durable solutions to refugee problems. The prospects for voluntary repatriation, the most favoured durable solution, are considerably improved when refugees have some assurance of assistance in rebuilding their home communities. Large-scale population movements, as most recently experienced in the Great Lakes region, threaten regional peace and security when left too long unresolved. Successful voluntary repatriation depends on political action to achieve peace, and economic action to rehabilitate war-torn societies.

West Africa

11. The refugee situation in West Africa has continued to be characterized by further substantial outflows, including 170,000 Liberian refugees into Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, as well as some 50,000 Sierra Leonean refugees into Guinea. In response, UNHCR mobilized and provided emergency assistance to these new groups of refugees.

12. Although no efforts have been spared to establish peace and stability, and to find a lasting solution to the humanitarian crisis in Liberia, attempts to restore peace have failed during the reporting period, despite the full deployment of the West African Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) in the country. The reconciliation initiative brokered by the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) never really went into effect, despite the signing of the Akosombo Agreement on 12 September 1994 by the Liberian warring factions. Instead, hostilities increased in the north-eastern region, forcing Liberians to flee into neighbouring countries. As a result, the prevailing precarious security conditions made it impossible to implement the planned organized repatriation. On 20 August 1995, leaders of all Liberia's warring factions met at Abuja and signed a peace accord. It is hoped that this may lead to improved security in Liberia, which could allow UNHCR to begin its long-planned voluntary repatriation programme for displaced and exiled Liberians. However, some spontaneous return continued despite the prevailing uncertainty and violence. In 1994, UNHCR assisted 6,700 spontaneous returnees from neighbouring countries. The repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees has also been adversely affected by intensified conflict and the continuing state of insecurity in the country.

13. While overall developments in the region give cause for concern, there is now renewed hope for the organized voluntary repatriation of Togolese refugees from Benin and Ghana, and of Malian Tuareg refugees, who have begun to return spontaneously to northern Mali. UNHCR is closely monitoring these developments with a view to planning assisted return and reintegration programmes.

The Horn and Eastern Africa

14. Throughout the Horn of Africa, large-scale situations of internal displacement, ethnic conflict, drought, and refugee and returnee emergencies take place in the context of poverty and environmental degradation. The resulting immense humanitarian needs require imaginative and flexible approaches in the planning of assistance programmes, resource mobilization and cost-effective means of delivering assistance to all those in need.

15. Since the beginning of 1994, a number of donor Governments, member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), United Nations agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have developed various initiatives addressing the political, humanitarian, social and economic development concerns of the region. UNHCR is following these initiatives with the intention of formulating a conceptual framework and programme for durable solutions in the region. The framework would focus on voluntary repatriation of refugees and the linkage of returnee operations to national and regional programmes, benefiting all categories of persons in need in the same geographical area.

16. A major repatriation operation of camp-based Ethiopian refugees was implemented from September 1994 to March 1995. During this period, about 17,000 refugees repatriated voluntarily from Camps in Djibouti through UNHCR's organized movements. Consequently, Aour-Aoussa camp was closed at the end of February 1995. The remaining 1,500 refugees at Aour-Aoussa (625 Ethiopians and 875 Somalis) were all transferred to Ali-Ade refugee camp. Of the remaining

23,000 refugees in three camps, 87 per cent are Somalis, most of whom are women and children of nomadic origin.

17. Following the signing of the "Peace and Reconciliation" agreement on 26 December 1994 between the Government of Djibouti and the opposition movement Front pour l'Unité et la Démocratie (FRUD), the authorities in Djibouti expressed readiness to facilitate the repatriation and reintegration of Djiboutian refugees of Afar origin who fled to north-eastern Ethiopia during the years 1991 to 1993. The agreement has also led to a general normalization of the socio-political situation in Djibouti and has encouraged the return of many families to their places of origin.

18. UNHCR and the Governments of Djibouti and Ethiopia agreed in January 1995 to continue transfer operations for the remaining 15,000 unassisted and unregistered urban refugees and displaced persons in Djibouti-ville, out of the 30,000 estimated in 1993. The transfer operation is being carried out in the context of voluntary repatriation whereby it is intended that repatriates will not stay for a long period of time in a transit centre.

19. The continuation of the transfer programme and the repatriation of about 18,000 Djiboutian refugees of Afar origin from Ethiopia were the subject of a letter of "Mutual Understanding" signed by both Governments and UNHCR on 15 January 1995.

20. During the course of 1994, two separate Memoranda of Understanding were signed by UNHCR with the Governments of Eritrea and the Sudan. These provide the framework for the voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees. The pilot phase, which planned for the repatriation of 25,000 Eritreans from the Sudan within the Programme for Refugee Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Resettlement Areas in Eritrea (PROFERI), began in November 1994. Some 24,200 Eritreans were assisted to return at the end of the pilot project. In addition, 29,530 Ethiopians and 172 Zairians benefited from UNHCR's assistance in their voluntary repatriation movements during 1994-1995.

21. As of May 1995, Ethiopia was hosting nearly 365,000 refugees, comprising 284,200 Somalis in the east, 53,300 Sudanese in the west, 18,000 Djiboutians, 8,700 Kenyans and 640 urban refugees of various nationalities.

22. The planned repatriation of Somali refugees from eastern Ethiopia to north-west Somalia in 1994 was suspended due to renewed fighting in Hargeisa. The fighting resulted in a fresh influx of some 80,000 Somali refugees into eastern Ethiopia. With relative calm returning to north-west Somalia, plans have been revived to pursue the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees during the second half of 1995. The repatriation of about 10,000 Somali refugees is foreseen for the end of 1995 under a pilot project, while the repatriation of some 100,000 is envisaged in 1996.

23. Reintegration assistance to 530,000 Ethiopian returnees from Somalia and some 60,000 from the Sudan, Kenya and Djibouti who had repatriated in earlier years was phased out, concluding on 31 December 1994. However, reintegration assistance is continuing in 1995 to some 35,644 Ethiopians who repatriated in 1994 from Djibouti, Kenya and Sudan. Repatriation of some 60,000 Ethiopian

refugees in the Sudan had been planned for 1995 but the slow pace of return led to a revised plan for an expected total of only 30,000 returnees in 1995, with the remainder in 1996. In addition, repatriation started in 1995 of some 35,650 Ethiopian refugees from Djibouti (25,000), Kenya (10,000) and other countries (650). By the end of May, about 3,000 refugees had returned from Kenya, and 9,256 from Djibouti. The majority of returnees in 1994 and 1995 have received individual reintegration packages in the form of agricultural implements, reintegration grants and, where feasible, income generation grants.

24. The year 1994 saw a marked decline in the influx of refugees to Kenya with a substantial increase in repatriation movements. In 1994, only 926 persons were recorded as arrivals in Kenya while more than 81,520 persons returned to their countries of origin. By 31 March 1995, there were 195,094 registered refugees in Kenya, the majority of whom were Somalis.

25. A combination of repatriation and relocation movements allowed UNHCR to close and consolidate several camps. Refugees who did not wish to return or could not return to their home areas were relocated to the Dadaab axis camps or to Kakuma camp.

26. Marafa camp, which hosts 31,000 Somali refugees, is scheduled to be closed during the second half of 1995. The planned closure of the smaller coastal camps hosting minority Somali ethnic groups suffers from serious constraints. The relocation of these minority Somalis to Dadaab axis camps or their repatriation to Somalia is not feasible without jeopardizing their personal security. Therefore, UNHCR is negotiating with the Government of Kenya for the retention of these coastal camps or the identification of suitable alternative sites.

27. The repatriation from border sites in the North-East Province of Kenya to the Gedo and Lower Juba regions of Somalia was completed in the first half of 1994. In 1995, an organized voluntary repatriation programme to Lower Juba has been ongoing from Dadaab camps. With the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) in March 1995 and subsequent insecurity, all international staff members in Somalia had to be withdrawn temporarily. Implementation of QIPs, the main UNHCR reintegration assistance in Somalia, was suspended.

28. In addition to the above movements to Somalia, UNHCR completed on 4 June 1995 the voluntary repatriation of 1,554 Ethiopians of Somali origin from Dadaab camps. Repatriation from Kenya to Rwanda and Uganda is also ongoing in 1995.

29. In view of the relative peace and stability which north-west Somalia enjoyed from mid-1993, a number of preparatory activities were undertaken by UNHCR during 1994 to encourage and facilitate the voluntary return of the Somali refugees in neighbouring countries, mainly Ethiopia and Djibouti. However, with the outbreak of fighting in and around Hargeisa in November 1994, the plan for organized repatriation of 10,000 refugees from eastern Ethiopia to north-west Somalia was suspended pending resolution of the conflict.

30. In June 1995, the central administration in Hargeisa gave written approval to UNHCR for the repatriation of 10,000 Somali refugees from camps in eastern Ethiopia under a pilot project. At the same time, the central administration also approved the voluntary return of all Somali refugees from asylum countries. In view of this positive development, the UNHCR Office in Hargeisa, in consultation with the UNHCR Regional Liaison Office in Addis Ababa, is planning the reception, onward movement and reintegration of returnees to their homes. This pilot project began in August 1995. Lessons learned will pave the way for the implementation of a large-scale repatriation programme from Ethiopia planned for 1996.

31. Although some 727,000 refugees are reported to be in the Sudan, the exact number is difficult to assess because there has been no recent census of the refugee population. A UNHCR technical and interdisciplinary mission to the Sudan in March 1995 recommended that a registration exercise be carried out jointly with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) and the Government in collaboration with UNHCR. The registration exercise is scheduled for the last quarter of 1995.

32. In the Sudan, continuing armed conflict, often combined with natural disasters such as floods, have taken an enormous toll on the civilian population. This has led to a continuous flow of Sudanese refugees into the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zaire. It has also resulted in the massive internal displacement of over 1.7 million persons in southern Sudan, the transitional areas between the north and the south, and in urban areas, particularly Khartoum. These persons are in desperate need of a broad range of assistance, including food, medical supplies, water and shelter. United Nations agencies and NGOs participating in Operation Lifeline Sudan are continuing their efforts to provide aid, but access to those in need has been problematic, owing to ongoing security problems.

33. Since mid-1994, some 60,000 Sudanese refugees have sought asylum in Uganda, bringing the total number of assisted Sudanese refugees to 325,000. The influx of new refugees necessitated the launching of emergency assistance and rural settlement programmes in early 1995. Care and maintenance assistance, including basic aid, food, water and health facilities, are being provided by UNHCR in coordination with the Ugandan Government, WFP and a range of NGOs.

Central Africa

34. During the reporting period the refugee situation in Central Africa has been marked by continued uncertainty in Rwanda, with over a million Rwandans still living in exile; the resurgence of ethnic conflict in Burundi followed by the simultaneous return and exodus of Burundian refugees; the outflow of Sudanese refugees into the Central African Republic and Zaire; a new era of national reconciliation in Chad; and the repatriation of Rwandan refugees from Uganda.

35. In February 1995, UNHCR and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) organized the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region, which was held at Bujumbura. The Conference adopted a plan of action addressing a wide range of concerns and agreed that no

meaningful solution could be found to problems of this magnitude without active cooperation between States and relevant international and regional organizations.

36. Following the dramatic events which provoked large-scale population movements from Rwanda in 1994, UNHCR has been providing protection and assistance to varying refugee caseloads in Burundi. Between June and December 1994, a total of 250,000 Rwandan refugees crossed into Burundi. During the first months of 1995, the number of arrivals increased, with the closure of internally displaced person (IDP) camps in Gikongoro Prefecture in Rwanda. More than 20,000 new arrivals were reported during the first four months of the year.

37. UNHCR transferred refugees from the unstable border area to seven different camps and established a care and maintenance programme for their assistance. By the end of 1994, basic services were available in all refugee camps: access roads were opened and sanitation, health and water facilities were established. Individual assistance in the form of plastic sheeting, blankets, jerrycans and cooking sets was provided to refugees upon their arrival in the camps. These programmes continued in 1995.

38. Following a series of security incidents affecting refugees in Burundi, some 30,000 Rwandan refugees fled to the United Republic of Tanzania during 1994. During 1995, a further 80,000 Rwandan refugees attempted to cross into the United Republic of Tanzania.

39. A Tripartite Agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees was signed between the Governments of Burundi and Rwanda and UNHCR on 14 December 1994. The planning assumption for the 1995 UNHCR assistance programme was that, while care and maintenance assistance needed to continue, at least 100,000 Rwandan refugees accommodated in camps, as well as "old" caseload refugees, would opt for voluntary repatriation in 1995. It is expected that refugee interest in repatriation from Burundi can be enhanced through confidence-building measures currently being implemented: dissemination of factual information on the situation in Rwanda; refugee visits to their areas of origin; and, whenever possible, visits of returnees already resettled in Rwanda to their former camps in Burundi.

40. Beginning in 1994 and continuing in 1995, assistance to returnees (some 200,000 who returned to Burundi from the United Republic of Tanzania in early 1994 and 300,000 who fled to Rwanda in the aftermath of the October 1993 events and then returned to Burundi after April 1994) has been disrupted by several factors: lack of security in areas of return; the geographical spread of areas of return; and the priority given to providing assistance to Rwandan refugees in Burundi. Some 50,000 have benefited from UNHCR's assistance, principally through the distribution of seeds and tools.

41. A total of 400 Burundi returnees who have so far repatriated from Rwanda during 1995 are being assisted in one site by UNHCR, pending the allocation of land for their resettlement by the Burundian authorities. It is expected that a further 2,500 Burundian refugees currently in Rwanda will repatriate during 1995. Reception facilities, as well as some reintegration activities, principally the distribution of repatriation kits consisting of seeds and

agriculture tools, are being established. However, a significant number of these returnees may remain dependent upon aid from the international community until a solution is found to the issue of land scarcity.

42. UNHCR, in collaboration with WFP and several NGOs, provided assistance to IDPs located in sites close to the refugee camps. This helped to alleviate tension between refugees, the local population and IDPs in the north of Burundi. Assistance consisted mainly of complementary food assistance provided by WFP. Basic camp planning, water and sanitation infrastructure and basic health facilities were provided by UNHCR through its implementing partners.

43. Following the constitution of a new Government in mid-July, UNHCR resumed its activities in Rwanda, assisting and monitoring the return of refugees and IDPs to their communes of origin. UNHCR concluded an agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for the transport of returnees and IDPs. NGOs have been providing technical support for the transport operation and are running the "way stations", the "reception" and "transit" centres in which returnees and IDPs have been receiving the necessary assistance on their way home. UNHCR has also been providing returnees with a repatriation package containing soap, blankets, jerrycans and mats. In addition to individual assistance, UNHCR has supported activities towards community rehabilitation, focusing on four main sectors - water, health, housing and primary education - in the areas most affected by the return of refugees and IDPs.

44. Several NGOs, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF and UNHCR are working towards developing solutions to the problem of unaccompanied minors through family tracing and support to foster families. UNHCR has set up a Regional Support Unit for Refugee Children which carries out a coordinating function within the framework of UNHCR's policy on "Refugee Unaccompanied Minors". UNHCR is also assisting the Ministry of the Family and Promotion of Women (MIFAPROFE) to help returnee women reintegrate into Rwandan society.

45. Since September 1994, the Government of Rwanda (and notably the Ministry of Rehabilitation) has been confronted with the particular problem of the massive return of refugees from the "old" caseload. The lengthy duration of their exile implies that these returnees do not have property or land to return to. A large proportion of them have settled in urban areas, principally in Kigali and Butare, where they live in houses owned by "new" caseload refugees. Smaller groups have also settled in other urban areas and along the main roads. UNHCR is helping the Government to settle "old" rural caseload returnees in new, Government-designated rural settlements and providing them with building materials.

46. Voluntary repatriation continues to be the preferred durable solution to the refugee problem in the region, but the recurring internal security problems in Rwanda, coupled with arbitrary arrests throughout the country, have emerged as major obstacles preventing refugees from returning. The forced closure of IDP camps and the outbreaks of violence in Kibeho camp also have had a negative impact on refugee repatriation movements.

47. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the number of Rwandan refugees grew from practically none to almost 575,000 in the Kagera region, beginning in April 1994 when about 200,000 Rwandans crossed the border within a period of 24 hours. The influx from Rwanda continued from May to the end of October with a daily average influx of some 1,500 persons. From November 1994 to March 1995, Rwandan refugees in Burundi also started entering the United Republic of Tanzania to escape insecurity in the camps in Burundi. A massive emergency response was initiated by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, UNHCR, donor countries, other United Nations agencies, notably WFP and UNICEF, and NGOs.

48. At the beginning of 1994, about 250,000 Burundi refugees repatriated spontaneously. About 45,000 of them remained in the Kigoma region at the United Republic of Tanzania. A new influx of about 60,000 refugees, however, took place in March 1995, following disturbances in Muyinga Province. On 31 March 1995 the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania closed its border with Burundi. The Government has maintained that positive steps must be taken towards implementation of the recommendations of the January 1995 Nairobi Presidential Summit on the voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees before reopening of the border can be considered.

49. Other developments in the United Republic of Tanzania during the reporting period included the organized voluntary repatriation of 13,000 Mozambicans, completed on schedule in October 1994.

50. In Zaire, the signing of a peace accord in 1994 paved the way for the repatriation of 5,370 Ugandan refugees during the latter part of 1994 and the beginning of 1995. A total of 4,640 Ugandans are expected to repatriate in 1995.

51. Meanwhile, the political and security situation in Sudan heightens fears of yet another influx of Sudanese into Zaire. Some 6,000 arrived during the first months of 1995. On the other hand, there is hope that Angolan refugees may return home following the signing of the Lusaka Peace Accord between the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Government of Angola on 5 May 1995.

52. Prior to the massive influx of Rwandan refugees into Zaire in July 1994, there were 18,000 Rwandan refugees in North Kivu and 106,000 Burundian refugees in South Kivu. The arrival of over 1.7 million Rwandans into both North and South Kivu called for the mounting of a large emergency aid programme, including the use of international military resources, to allow the international aid community to address this unparalleled humanitarian disaster.

53. The first few weeks of the emergency were especially tragic. Thousands of refugees died from waterborne diseases and dehydration; the towns of Goma, Uvira and Bukavu were completely overwhelmed by the transient refugee populations; violence and insecurity dominated daily life in the camps; food distribution was manipulated by the refugee leaders to the detriment of vulnerable refugees; the population of unaccompanied minors swelled as mothers abandoned children to the NGO community in a desperate attempt to ensure their survival; and the unique

ecological preserve of the Virunga National Park was violated daily in the quest for cooking fuel and supplementary food.

54. Through the massive effort of United Nations agencies, donors and NGOs, the crisis had eased by the end of August 1994 and the rudiments of order and calm emerged over the next six months. The majority of refugees moved out of the towns into the camps and UNHCR began the consolidation of camp and agency activities. UNHCR field staff succeeded in effecting food distribution to heads of households and ensured a more equitable access to food. Through the tremendous efforts of the health-oriented NGOs, mortality rates dropped considerably. After many delays and much resistance on the part of the refugee community, UNHCR successfully registered all refugees. By the end of March 1995, the population size was known for all camps.

55. Security remained the greatest problem in the camps. Serious intimidation of any individual expressing a desire to return to Rwanda occurred frequently and was a major deterrent to repatriation. Other security problems, such as banditry, weapons smuggling, rape, misappropriation of humanitarian assistance, violent attacks against aid workers, rioting and looting also abounded. By January 1995, agreement had been reached on an experimental solution - the Zairian Camp Security Operation. Deployment of both the Zairian Camp Security Contingent, composed of Zairian security agents, and the Civilian Security Liaison Group, composed of expatriate police and military officers, began immediately in the North Kivu camps, and was completed by 15 May in South Kivu as well.

56. At the end of October 1994, the Governments of Zaire and Rwanda and UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement which established the conditions for the voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees in safety and dignity. By mid-December 1994 the situation had calmed to the extent that organized repatriation could begin; in 1994 at least 154,000 Rwandans returned home, most of them spontaneously. Organized repatriation numbers peaked in February 1995, with nearly 1,000 refugees per day registering for return. However, there was a sharp decline following the deterioration of conditions in Rwanda and incidents of intimidation in Kibeho camp in April 1995.

Southern Africa

57. Continuing political stability in Mozambique, and the successful conclusion of free and fair elections in October 1994, encouraged the repatriation and reintegration of some 1.6 million Mozambican refugees from Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, including 316,118 whose return transportation was organized by UNHCR. Only a few thousand Mozambican refugees remain to be assisted in their return home. Almost all the refugee camps and settlements in the countries of asylum, as well as the associated infrastructure, have been handed over to the respective Governments for alternative uses.

58. The repatriation programme for Mozambican refugees was one of the largest in UNHCR's history. Organized movements at the peak period reached well over 4,000 individuals per day and took place simultaneously by truck, bus, train and boat to a variety of locations inside Mozambique. The successful conclusion of

this complex operation has been due largely to concerted cooperation between UNHCR and the participating Governments, other United Nations agencies and NGO implementing partners.

59. Until June 1996, UNHCR will consolidate its activities in returnee areas to ensure sustainability of its reintegration programme. Rehabilitation projects for major returnee areas are being implemented in close cooperation with the Government and other field partners. At the same time, UNHCR's Branch Office in Maputo will gradually phase out all field offices charged with reintegration projects by mid-1996 and is actively pursuing a linkage of UNHCR activities to longer-term developmental programmes now under way in the country.

60. These positive developments in Mozambique paved the way for a regional approach which includes the fostering of close working relationships with Governments and regional institutions such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as local NGOs on issues of regional concern such as population movements, emergency preparedness and irregular refugee movements.

61. In Angola, since the signing of the November peace agreement ending nearly two decades of civil war, prospects for the return of Angolan refugees have improved. As a result, some 5,500 refugees have returned spontaneously to their country. In June 1995, the Government of Angola and UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding at Luanda for the promotion of voluntary repatriation of some 300,000 Angolan refugees. In this connection, UNHCR has prepared an integrated regional plan of action for the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Angolan refugees over a 30-month period starting from July 1995 and continuing through until December 1997.

62. During the first year of the operation, UNHCR will focus on activities aimed at establishing the necessary conditions within Angola for the reception and integration of returnees. UNHCR will coordinate with the other agencies and bodies within the United Nations system, including the Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Assistance to Angola (UCAH) and the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) on matters of primary concern to help assure the conditions of safe return, such as accessibility, mine awareness and de-mining activities, water, health, sanitation and basic agricultural assistance.

63. The second phase of the operation, from July to December 1996, will focus on a programme of organized repatriation. An estimated 82,000 Angolan refugees in neighbouring countries may require organized transport to return. Refugees who repatriate through UNHCR-organized programmes will be transported from countries of asylum through designated border entry points to reception centres in Angola. From the reception centres, returnees will be transported on trucks to final destinations near their home communities.

64. It is planned to begin phasing down the operation by mid-1997. Emphasis will be placed, during the last phase of the programme, on consolidation of reintegration assistance to provide a solid basis for effective integration of the returnees into their communities, and to engage them in a productive sustainable economic life. The efforts which have already been initiated, in the first phase of the operation, will be intensified in order to ensure that the returnee programme remains an integral part of the national development plan

by coordinating the implementation strategies with bilateral and multilateral programmes. These concerted efforts, in coordination with the Government, other United Nations agencies and NGOs, should ensure that the activities initiated for the benefit of the returnees and their communities during the initial phase are sustained and continued by the development agencies.

Other developments

65. Recognizing the dual impact of the presence of refugees on the environment and of the hostile environment on the well-being of refugees, UNHCR has reassessed environmental and related socio-economic issues with a view to reinforcing its efforts to address environmental problems in the following ways:

(a) By adopting a more ecologically sensitive approach in the planning and implementation of refugee site management. For instance, an expanded provision of fuel and fuel-efficient stoves is increasingly being considered and an improved design for a drainage/waste water system is being applied at many sites;

(b) By undertaking studies in the sectors of shelter, water and sanitation to minimize the negative impact on the surroundings and improve the conditions of refugee camps and settlements in an ecologically sound manner;

(c) By recognizing that refugees themselves are an important collective force for positive change. Through the People-Oriented Planning (POP) training programme and greater refugee participation in the development and implementation of UNHCR programmes, awareness of environmental conservation is being promoted;

(d) By promoting environmental rehabilitation programmes aimed at attracting development assistance funds for the rehabilitation of refugee-affected areas.

Expenditure

66. UNHCR expenditure and allocations for assistance in Africa in 1994 totalled $506.1 million of which $167.4 million were made available from General Programmes funds and $338.7 million from Special Programmes funds. The revised 1995 General Programmes target approved by the Executive Committee at its forty-fifth session is $163.1 million. The amount required for Special Programmes in 1995 is estimated, at mid-year, at $387.6 million.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

67. During the period covered by the present report, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), on behalf of the United Nations system and in pursuit of its humanitarian coordination function under General Assembly resolution 46/182, issued appeals for emergency assistance to the populations affected by the political and humanitarian crises in Angola, Burundi, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the Sudan.

68. Operations in Angola have, since November 1994, been reoriented towards relief, resettlement, demobilization, reintegration and mine clearance action. In connection with the ongoing crisis in Burundi, the work of the humanitarian agencies has focused on those fleeing within the country and into the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire. The successful response to humanitarian needs has so far offset the likelihood of a major humanitarian crisis.

69. For Kenya, a consolidated appeal was launched in early 1994 to cover one year; the donor response amounted to $54.9 million (57 per cent of the amount sought for a target population of 1,620,000). Over 200,000 Somali refugees are still in Kenya. In the case of Liberia, a new appeal was launched for January through June 1995: $65.3 million for food aid, agriculture, food security, health, water, sanitation, shelter and education. Less than 50 per cent was donated in response to the appeal. While the humanitarian assistance community issued a joint statement in October 1994 regarding its decision not to operate without minimum security guarantees, the United Nations system and NGOs nevertheless provided assistance to 1.5 million out of 1.8 million Liberians requiring such assistance. The intensification of fighting since early 1995 has resulted in an increased flow of IDPs.

70. The successful programme in Mozambique has addressed the emergency needs of 4 to 5 million IDPs, 1.6 million returning refugees and 90,000 demobilized soldiers. There was an 82 per cent response rate to the appeal for the $775 million consolidated Humanitarian Assistance Programme. In Rwanda, as of 6 June 1995, only 43 per cent of the $219 million consolidated appeal had been donated. For the subregion, of $588 million required only 61 per cent had been received. Serious food shortages in Rwanda and in the region are especially harmful for refugee camps and for the large numbers of internally displaced. About 2 million refugees remain in the region. There is great concern that the pressure of returning refugees and tensions from neighbouring countries will result in further deterioration of the situation. The danger of a major humanitarian emergency in Sierra Leone has worsened since late 1994; rebel attacks have resulted in an estimated 500,000 IDPs and in an overconcentration of persons in some areas. An inter-agency appeal on behalf of new refugees and populations affected by the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone in the amount of $14.6 million for March through December 1995 has so far received very little response.

71. For the post-UNOSOM II humanitarian programmes in Somalia, a consolidated appeal was launched in January 1995 ($70.3 million requested for a six-month period, less than 20 per cent met by donations). The programme addresses the needs of refugees, returnees and IDPs for relief and rehabilitation. As long as no stable Government exists, assistance programmes aim at self-reliance and community initiatives. Rehabilitation activities are initiated where security conditions allow. For the Sudan, a new appeal for $101 million to benefit some 4,250,000 people was recently launched. The donor response so far has been poor. Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) has made considerable progress and its area of operation has been expanded. The improved harvest of 1994 has allowed the scaling down of the United Nations consolidated appeal by 45 per cent. Renewed large-scale fighting and denial of access by air have impaired delivery of humanitarian assistance, although the two-month cease-fire brokered by former

United States President Jimmy Carter has offered some respite in the ongoing civil strife. A basic review of OLS is planned for late 1995.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

72. Refugees and internally displaced were again the main beneficiaries of WFP relief assistance during 1994. In Africa, during 1994, WFP assisted more than 17 million refugees, internally displaced and war-affected persons with a commitment of more than 1.4 million tons of food. New commitments in the first half of 1995 already reached 1 million tons for 7 million beneficiaries.

73. For the region of Africa (23 countries), five protracted refugee operations and 18 emergency operations were approved for a total of $68 million in 1994.

74. WFP continued to strengthen collaboration arrangements with UNHCR in refugee, returnee and internally displaced feeding operations. A further revision of the joint working arrangements was introduced in early 1994 to improve the effectiveness of joint feeding operations. Under this arrangement, the programme has further extended its responsibility by taking over management of the extended delivery points (EDP).

75. In the protracted, post-emergency phase of relief operations, attention has increasingly focused on identifying appropriate interventions which merge relief and rehabilitation objectives. This has been the case in major long-standing operations such as those in Liberia, Rwanda and Burundi. In order to achieve better targeting and to facilitate the transition to long-term self-security, general food distribution is progressively phased out in favour of: (i) food-for-work (FFW) schemes for construction/rehabilitation of agricultural and community infrastructure; and (ii) special feeding programmes to provide safety nets for vulnerable groups.

76. The concept of a "continuum from relief to development" has been a major focus in the preparation and implementation of WFP interventions during 1994 and the first half of 1995. These activities have included rehabilitation programmes, resettlement and implementation of household surveys in various countries. These surveys were to identify the beneficiaries' needs and to help develop a proper targeting strategy.

77. A comprehensive study of WFP's policy and practice with regard to gender in emergencies was initiated in 1995. The objective of this review was to look into the diversity and persistent character of certain obstacles hampering the welfare of women and to see how their special needs could be integrated in programme planning and implementation.

78. WFP, together with UNHCR, is actively interested in promoting and ensuring, particularly in post-crisis situations, a better interface between humanitarian interventions and development, with the aim of ensuring sustainable solutions. Humanitarian assistance is used to facilitate reintegration of displaced people into a process of social and economic recovery. WFP, in conjunction with UNHCR, continues to review significant reintegration experiences in order to draw upon lessons learned. Future evaluations will cover Mozambique and Rwanda/Burundi.

79. WFP is involved in the major refugee and IDP operations in Africa, a summary of which is provided below.

A. West Africa

Liberia region

80. WFP continues to provide food assistance to over 2.5 million Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees and IDPs in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Employment and income-generation activities in agriculture and trade exist for refugees (many of whom are now integrated into host families) both in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. A progressive phasing-out strategy has been introduced for these beneficiaries while a safety net has been maintained for vulnerable groups and new arrivals. Under the new phase of assistance, integration of agricultural development projects and other efforts to encourage self-sufficiency will be intensified by United Nations agencies and donors.

Togo region

81. The appointment of a new Government in Togo led to some improvement in the economic situation of the country. A household survey carried out among refugees in Benin and Ghana revealed that most refugees have been integrated and have been able, with the support of WFP and UNHCR, to reach a certain level of self-sufficiency. A programme of repatriation is also being planned. WFP has continued its assistance to displaced persons in Ghana.

B. Great Lakes region

82. As of June 1995, an estimated 2 million refugees had sought refuge in Zaire, the United Republic of Tanzania and Burundi. They continue to receive WFP food assistance. The food aid requirement for this refugee feeding emergency programme amounted to 60,000 tons of commodities a month.

83. In Rwanda and Burundi, WFP began working closely with the respective Governments to channel needed assistance for rehabilitation work. In Rwanda, priorities since September 1994 and for 1995 have been the seed protection programme and local integration of returnees in their home communities. In addressing the emergency and rehabilitation and reconstruction initiatives in Rwanda, WFP is planning to cover the needs of beneficiaries in the form of FFW schemes rather than free distribution to avoid food aid dependency among the target population. In Burundi, WFP successfully initiated programmes to resettle IDPs. "Returnee" packages, which included a one-month food ration, seeds and tools, were made available to the 35,000 displaced families who resettled in 1994.

C. Eastern and southern Africa

84. WFP activities with UNHCR during the period under review focused on attaining durable solutions, with particular emphasis on voluntary repatriation.

Repatriation of Eritrean refugees in the Sudan began at the end of 1994 and continued in 1995. It is expected that 135,000 refugees will return. WFP, together with UNHCR, is making plans to assist the voluntary repatriation of Ethiopian refugees in the Sudan and Somali refugees in Kenya.

Mozambique

85. During the reporting period, reintegration activities were intensified in major returnee areas with the distribution of seeds and tools together with food rations.

86. WFP has also contributed to the rehabilitation of feeder roads, schools, health centres and basic urban services. Furthermore, food assistance was extended to health and malnutrition-rehabilitation centres and training institutes. The monthly allocation of food aid amounted to an average of 25,000 tons.

87. Food delivery improved during the reporting year with most of the returnee areas accessible and the monitoring and reporting capacities at the provincial level enhanced.

Angola

88. The resumption of the Angolan civil war in 1992 had a dramatic impact on the living conditions of the Angolan population. During 1994 and the first half of 1995, WFP emergency food assistance was provided to nearly 2 million people including displaced persons, returnees and conflict- and drought-affected victims.

Other

89. WFP is also assisting with the supply and delivery of food to several smaller refugee operations in the Central African Republic, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Uganda, Zambia and Burkina Faso.

IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR POLICY COORDINATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

90. In the recent past, political conflicts and civil wars have been responsible for dramatic increases in the number of refugees and displaced persons. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development is co-organizing, with the Government of Japan, a high-level symposium in October 1995 at Tokyo on Peace and Development: Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa. The purpose is to respond to the need to attack the root causes of massive population displacements in Africa.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/414
7 September 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Item 111 of the
provisional agenda*

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS

Comprehensive consideration and review of the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and related migratory movements

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 23 December 1994, at its forty-ninth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 49/173 entitled "Comprehensive consideration and review of the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and related migratory movements".

2. In the resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed the need for the international community to consider comprehensive approaches for the coordination of action with regard to refugees, returnees, displaced persons and related migratory movements. The Assembly called upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in consultation with concerned States and in coordination with relevant intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations, to continue to consider comprehensive regional approaches to the problems of refugees and displaced persons. It also called upon the High Commissioner to continue her efforts to promote and develop a preparatory process, leading to the convening, not later than 1996, of a regional conference to address the problems of refugees, displaced persons, other forms of involuntary displacement and returnees in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and relevant neighbouring States, and urged States and the

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intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations concerned to support that process, including follow-up measures. Finally, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fiftieth session on the implementation of resolution 49/173.

II. REGIONAL INITIATIVES OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

3. As the range of persons recognized to be in need of international protection has grown since UNHCR's inception, the scope of UNHCR's activities has also changed from a primarily reactive approach, largely focused on protection and assistance in countries of asylum, to an approach in which protection provides the basis for a strategy of prevention, preparedness and solutions, with increasing emphasis on activities in countries of origin.

4. In recent years, UNHCR has stressed the importance of such comprehensive approaches and has developed a number of action-oriented initiatives in response to regional problems. Notable among these have been the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, the International Conference on Central American Refugees and the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees. In February 1995, UNHCR organized a regional conference on assistance to refugees and displaced persons in the Great Lakes region, which was held at Bujumbura. The Conference adopted a plan of action on an integrated political, humanitarian and development approach to resolve the problem of refugees and displaced persons in the region.

5. In 1995, the High Commissioner launched an initiative to promote and develop a concerted and comprehensive strategy to address issues concerning refugees, displaced persons and migratory movements in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region. UNHCR has proposed and initiated a series of consultations and technical meetings focusing on the region, as part of a process intended to lead to an agreement on a comprehensive programme of action and the establishment of an implementing framework.

III. PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PREPARATORY PROCESS LEADING TO A REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROBLEMS OF REFUGEES, DISPLACED PERSONS, OTHER FORMS OF INVOLUNTARY DISPLACEMENT AND RETURNEES IN THE CIS COUNTRIES AND RELEVANT NEIGHBOURING STATES

6. Following the adoption by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993 of resolution 48/113, on the convening of a United Nations conference for the comprehensive consideration and review of the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and migrants, UNHCR has, since early 1994, consulted with Governments of the CIS countries, neighbouring and other interested countries and international organizations, particularly the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to determine the appropriateness of that endeavour.

7. Under General Assembly resolution 49/173, UNHCR was mandated to initiate a process involving a great number of actors in the international community, in particular Governments and international and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as development agencies and financial institutions, in the preparation of a regional conference. UNHCR is currently acting in close partnership with IOM and the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The three organizations share the same concern over the magnitude and complexity of actual and potential migration and refugee issues in the CIS and neighbouring countries. They also recognize the complementarity of mandates, approaches and procedures.

8. To prepare the preliminary meetings and the conference itself, a joint secretariat was established at UNHCR by the three organizations in January 1995 for a period of 15 months. It focuses on the following objectives:

(a) Steering the preparatory process for the CIS conference through consultations and negotiations with the parties concerned in close cooperation with interested Governments and international organizations;

(b) Providing support to the process in the form of logistics, secretarial assistance, translation, interpretation, supplies and documentation, as well as participation in the conference and meetings;

(c) Coordinating the provision of expert inputs and studies on relevant subjects;

(d) Providing all related public information functions.

9. A joint UNHCR/IOM appeal for the secretariat of the conference was launched on 20 January 1995. The overall meeting and conference costs budgeted for UNHCR total $748,000 for the period 1 January 1995 to 31 March 1996. A contribution of $384,476 is required to cover IOM costs.

10. Between December 1994 and August 1995, six informal meetings of a steering group, comprising representatives of concerned and interested Governments and international organizations, were held at Geneva to give direction to the preparatory process. Among the first tasks of the Steering Group were clarifying the objectives of the process and preparing for the first meeting of experts.

11. A series of national consultations were held during February, March and April 1995 in Ukraine, Belarus and the Republic of Moldova, with the first regional consultation taking place in March in Kyrgyzstan for the five Central Asian Republics. Consultations have also taken place in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and in the Baltic States.

12. A first meeting of experts, held on 18 and 19 May 1995 at Geneva, was attended by the following countries and international organizations:

CIS: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine;

Other interested States: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America;

United Nations organs and agencies and other international organizations and institutions: United Nations Centre for Human Rights, Council of Europe, Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Labour Office, International Organization for Migration, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Office at Geneva;

Other institutions: European Commission.

13. The main task of the first meeting of experts was to identify the issues of concern and to prepare the work plan for the conference.

14. The types of movements to be addressed in the process were identified as follows: refugees, displaced persons, resettlers, formerly deported peoples, irregular migration, trafficking in migrants, stranded migrants and ecological migration. In addition, the following general issues were among those raised:

(a) Inadequacies of current terminology relating to refugees and displaced persons: Agreement was reached on the need for a more uniform and harmonized use of terminology both in national legislation and in regional agreements. It was recognized that the refugee definition contained in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees might not fully cover current regional needs. It was also felt that various involuntary movements taking place in the region would not fall within existing norms and standards;

(b) National implementation of international instruments: It was recognized that a gap exists between international instruments and implementation at the national level: the lack of effective implementation of international obligations is due to economic, social and political difficulties inherent in the transition process. Proper guidance and technical advisory services should be provided, in particular to assist in the establishment of appropriate administrative structures;

(c) Emergency preparedness: A need was perceived for contingency plans and the establishment of a structure conducive to the reception and provision of relief to refugees and displaced persons;

(d) Harmonized regional approach: There was recognition of the need for a harmonized regional approach to be adopted and subsequently implemented in the areas of preventive action, management of displacement crises and burden-sharing mechanisms. It was also felt that a unified approach should be used for promotion and training activities, including the organization of conferences and seminars at the regional and subregional level;

(e) Root causes: It was proposed that an in-depth study of the root causes underlying displacement in the region be undertaken. This should also assess the psychological impact of displacement on the population;

(f) Administrative systems: It was recognized that many countries in the region require assistance in the strengthening of their administrative systems in order to be able to deal with the migration challenges;

(g) Cooperation: There was recognition of the need for cooperation among the countries themselves, among international organizations and within the broader international community.

15. A draft work plan was submitted to the Meeting of Experts and later refined in the light of comments received by the secretariat. The plan was structured as follows: a series of subregional meetings were to be held between July and September 1995, at which country representatives would analyse the issues of concern identified in the first meeting of experts; a second meeting of experts was envisaged for November 1995, at which possible solutions would be discussed on the basis of the conclusions of the subregional meetings and of the input provided by the non-governmental sector; in conjunction, a drafting committee would be convened to start drafting a declaration of principles and a programme of action; a third meeting of experts was scheduled tentatively for December 1995; a preparatory conference and the conference itself were planned for the first quarter of 1996. The Steering Group referred to in paragraph 10 above would continue to meet at Geneva at regular intervals throughout the process.

16. The first two subregional meetings were held at Tbilisi, Georgia, on 10 and 11 July for the Transcaucasus region and Ashkhabad, Turkmenistan, on 27 July for the Central Asian Republics. At both meetings participants reviewed and discussed existing terminology and agreed on a common set of terms to be used to define the various categories of persons moving within the region. The effects of population displacement were thoroughly analysed and governmental responses assessed. Finally, the issues of emergency preparedness, early warning, migration management, return and reintegration were discussed.

17. The overall objective of the process initiated in 1994 is to provide a wide and open forum for the international community, and particularly the concerned countries, to acknowledge, review and discuss all population movements taking place in the CIS and neighbouring region in a humanitarian and non-political framework. In addition, the main objective of the process would be to devise an integrated strategy for the region, through the drafting of a declaration of principles and a programme of action. In the long run, a shared commitment on the roles and responsibilities of each of the concerned parties should be reached. This would be reflected in an accountability framework which would pave the way for achieving durable solutions to existing problems and for preventing potential ones. The plan, endorsed and supported by the international community, would enable countries to cope with the migration challenges faced by the CIS region.

18. The primary, and ultimate beneficiaries of this endeavour are all persons in need of UNHCR's protection and assistance in the CIS region, as well as those of concern to IOM.

19. The CIS conference process should contribute to strengthening institutional cooperation not only among international and regional governmental organizations but also with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with population displacements in the CIS and neighbouring countries. The collaborative effort between the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, the Open Society Institute and other non-governmental organizations active in the region have been welcomed, and the CIS secretariat has been requested to ensure the linkage between the intergovernmental and the non-governmental processes.

20. The CIS conference secretariat has kept the community of non-governmental organizations fully informed by organizing briefing sessions at each stage of the process. In addition, a meeting was to be organized in October 1995 to discuss possible solutions with non-governmental organizations, academics and other independent actors. The conclusions of the meeting were to be submitted to the second meeting of experts. Following a suggestion from the Open Society Institute to organize consultations at the field level with local and international non-governmental organizations active in the region, meetings with local non-governmental organizations took place at Tbilisi and Moscow in July 1995. Similar meetings were planned for the last quarter of 1995 at Alma Ata (Almaty), Kiev and Novosibirsk.

IV. SPECIFIC MEASURES TAKEN BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN IMPLEMENTING GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 49/173

21. In preparing the present report, UNHCR wrote on 19 June 1995 to those international organizations which have been closely involved with the CIS conference process to provide information on specific measures taken in implementing General Assembly resolution 49/173.

22. By 15 July 1995, the following international organizations and institutions had provided information on specific measures taken: the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Economic Commission for Europe and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

23. In its response, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis noted that it had been designated to act as focal point for the preparation of the report called for by General Assembly resolution 49/127, which requested the Secretary-General to prepare "in consultation with all States and relevant international and regional organizations a report on international migration and development, including aspects related to objectives and modalities for the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development". The report, 1/ which was considered by the Economic and Social Council at its 1995 session, indicates that those Governments favouring the holding of an international conference on international migration

and development generally agree on the need for it to consider all types of migrants, including refugees. The ongoing activities to promote and develop the preparatory process for convening a regional conference, as requested in resolution 49/173, would provide, according to the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, a crucial input towards a more general conference, were one to be convened.

24. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights is actively participating in and supporting the CIS conference process. Its efforts for a comprehensive approach to the problem of refugees, internally displaced persons and other migratory movements include strengthening conflict prevention and early warning capacities. Regional approaches are currently under consideration for the Caucasus region.

25. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs has actively participated in the preparatory meetings of the CIS conference process, including those of the Steering Group and the subregional meetings at Tbilisi and Ashkhabad. In operational terms, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs launched in April 1994 a consolidated inter-agency appeal for Tajikistan for the year 1995. The appeal reflected awareness of UNHCR plans to bring to a close its relief activities by December 1995. A similar appeal was launched for the Caucasus in May 1994. As a result of the emergency situation in Chechnya, the Russian Federation, a United Nations consolidated appeal in support of displaced persons was issued by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in March 1995.

26. The secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe is mainly involved in the monitoring of international population movements and in conducting research on the causes and consequences of those movements. It is currently conducting in-depth surveys of international migration in Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine, the results of which were to be published in 1996.

27. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development participated in the first meeting of experts and is fully supportive of the activities being undertaken by UNHCR and other agencies in implementing General Assembly resolution 49/173.

Notes

1/ E/1995/69.